

# SUDAN TEETERING ON THE EDGE OF DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. As the end of the session begins to revolve and move toward an end, you begin to hear a lot of discussions about the end of the session business or unfinished business. And I hope as we proceed toward the first conclusion of the 109th Congress, we will view the concept of unfinished business as not only domestic but international. I ask that this body and the administration, this Nation, not have on our clock another Rwanda.

I don't think our former President would mind when I make the remarks that one of the most difficult days and difficult times of that past administration was the failure to act expeditiously on Rwanda. And today we ask that Sudan not be another Rwanda, Sudan that is now teetering on the edge of disaster, human disaster, and the devastation of thousands upon hundreds of thousands of human beings. And what is the reason? The reason simply is one person, one man, one human being, one head of state, one president. The President of Sudan indicates that if the African Union peacekeepers were to set foot on the soil of Sudan, he would consider it an attack and therefore attack individuals dispatched by the world community.

Now, the question becomes, what is the response of this world community? Is it intimidation, to be intimidated? Is it false diplomacy, to sit back and allow this person to brutalize and to, if you will, reject the hand of friendship offered by the collective world community?

I ask that we not be intimidated and oppressed by the President of Sudan and that we demand that African Union peacekeepers who have been dispatched by the United Nations, the very body that has been sent to bring the world nations together to solve problems, do their job. And that requires sometimes enhanced diplomacy, not accepting diplomacy, and certainly a firm hand and firm attitude and firm action.

None of us are asking to provoke violence, but violence already exists in the Sudan. For those of us who have gone, some of us who went through Chad because the Sudanese Government refused to give a number of Members of Congress the diplomatic papers necessary, many just simply went. When I went to Chad and visited with the refugees there in the camps, Chad already as a neighboring country is overwhelmed and being, if you will, undermined by the hundreds of thousands of refugees and the lack of support and resources. I was glad to support an amendment to the foreign operations appropriations to ensure that some of those heavy burdens of Chad would be provided for.

But you have not and cannot understand the devastation of violence in

Sudan if you have not sat down on the ground with the women in a circle as I have in those refugee camps listening to women who would not look at me face to face, who hid their eyes and their faces, who didn't want to talk about the massive rapes over and over again by those who would intimidate, rape, murder their men and them and their children. Women who had to go out to get the firewood because the man could not. The men obviously were not raped, they were brutalized and murdered, and so the women sacrificed their bodies by going out to be raped, because if the men went out they would be murdered. Is this not a call to action? Is this not a reason to tell the President of Sudan to stand down and step aside?

We have gone into conflict and we have had rousing and vigorous debates on lesser items than this. And so to the President who is now at the United Nations, it is time to turn these three days of the general assembly around issues of severity. There is life or death matters going on in Sudan. And might I just say this: just a few weeks ago, there was some sort of survey that categorized the Members of Congress and their response to these issues. Unfortunately, it was a skewed survey, because one of the amendments that it scored was an amendment that this Congress utilize to make a point by taking money away from Egypt. Obviously, that is not the right way to go when you talk about solving the problem of Sudan. The way to solve the problem for Sudan is to put an allotment of dollars that doesn't take away from anyone and enhances both the resources necessary for bringing those violent perpetrators out of there and away from those refugees, and as well supporting the African Union peacekeepers.

## FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2463. An act to designate certain land in New England as wilderness for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation system and certain land as a National Reservation Area, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2864) "An Act to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes," agrees to a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. INHOFE, Mr. WARNER, Mr. BOND, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. CHAFEE, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. VITTER, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mrs. BOXER,

and Mr. CARPER, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

## REAL SECURITY SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, 229 years ago today, American forces under the command of General Horatio Gates defeated the British at Saratoga, New York. This battle and the subsequent engagement at Saratoga several weeks later turned the tide of the American Revolution and were crucial in securing the survival of our fledgling Nation.

More than two centuries later, the United States is the most powerful Nation on Earth, but we face myriad challenges to our national security that our revolutionary forebearers could not have imagined.

Throughout much of our history, the security of our Nation was an issue that was above politics. America's leaders put aside their differences and, working together, ensured that our country remained strong and free. Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, that bipartisan tradition has been cast aside by our GOP colleagues who have sought for the last three decades to portray the Democratic Party as weak on defense or insufficiently concerned with defending the United States. Never mind that this wholly distorts the historical record of Democrats who have always, always answered the Nation's call to lead in the defense of our country. It was Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, who led America during the first World War and vowed to make the world safe for democracy.

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It was Franklin Roosevelt, a Democrat, who guided this Nation and the entire free world through World War II.

It was Harry Truman, a Democrat, who made the tough decisions to use the atomic bomb against Japan to contain Soviet expansionism after the war and to confront the North Korean attack against South Korea in 1950.

It was John Kennedy, a Democrat, who went eyeball to eyeball with Nikita Khrushchev during the Cuban missile crisis.

These great leaders and their successors, including Lyndon Johnson and Bill Clinton, never shied away from the hard fights, and our friends on the other side of the aisle know it. Nevertheless, Republicans have continued to try to scare the American people into believing that only they can protect the country.

This shameful use of national security as a political wedge issue has reached new lows since the September 11 attacks. In 2002 and 2004 and again in this election season, Republicans from President Bush on down have used terrorism as a political issue. In so doing,

they have up-ended America's long tradition of optimism, self-confidence and bipartisanship on national security.

In 1933, President Roosevelt told a Nation shaken by 3 years of depression that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. President Bush has spent the last 5 years telling the American people the only thing we really have to fear is the loss of GOP rule.

My colleagues, including the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the other distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), and the gentleman from my home State of California (Mr. CARDOZA) will join tonight in a message to the American people that we must change course from the administration's policies which have endangered our country, and that Democrats will do a better job at protecting the American people.

Our plan, Real Security, was developed with the assistance of a broad range of experts, former military officers, retired diplomats, law enforcement personnel, homeland security experts and others who helped identify key areas where current policies have failed and where new ones are needed.

The Real Security Plan rests on five pillars. They involve the creation of a 21st century military, a smart strategy to win the war on terror, a plan to secure our homeland, a way forward in Iraq, and a proposal for achieving energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, a Democratic Congress will rebuild the state-of-the-art military by making needed investments in equipment and manpower so we can project to protect America wherever and whenever necessary.

We have all heard stories of parents throughout the country using their own money to purchase body armor for their children serving in Iraq. I have asked Secretary Rumsfeld about the shortage of body armor and the lack of properly armored vehicles, about hold-ups in the development of equipment to counter roadside bombs that have killed and maimed so many of our troops. Despite his assurances, the last few months have seen a spike in the number of IED attacks against American forces in Iraq, and they seem more lethal than ever.

Under Real Security, Democrats will guarantee all of our troops have the protective gear, the equipment, the training they need and are never sent to war without accurate intelligence and a strategy for success.

I have been to Iraq three times, Afghanistan twice. I visit our troops wounded here at home, there in Germany. I have spoken at the funerals of my constituents killed in Iraq. I have sat with their families as they have mourned. These experiences have reinforced my sense of commitment to ensuring the well-being of America's soldiers and their families and our veterans.

Democrats will enact a GI Bill of Rights for the 21st Century that guar-

antees our troops, Active, Reserve, retired, our veterans and their families, receive the pay, health care, mental health services and other benefits they have earned and deserve.

Our Active military are stretched to the breaking point, but our Guard and Reserves have also been ground down by multiple deployments, falling enlistment and reenlistment. This has, in turn, added to the stress.

I remember meeting one young marine from California when I was in Iraq who had been there for 9 months and was on his way home. His wife, also in the service of this country, was on her way to Iraq. These are the kinds of deployments that are so taxing on our military families.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats will strengthen our National Guard in partnership with our Nation's Governors to ensure it is fully manned, properly equipped and available to meet missions at home and abroad.

The next pillar of Real Security is a broad strategy to win the war on terror. Four-and-a-half years, five years after 9/11, Osama bin Laden is still at large. Al Qaeda has morphed into a worldwide amalgam of discrete cells that are more difficult to track down. When Democrats are in charge, we will make the elimination of Osama bin Laden our first priority. We will destroy al Qaeda and other terrorist networks and finish the job in Afghanistan, ending the threat posed by the Taliban. We propose to double the size of our Special Forces, increase our human intelligence capabilities, and ensure that our intelligence is free from political pressure.

Despite their vow to drain the swamp, the administration has done little to eliminate terrorist breeding grounds by combating the economic, social and political conditions that allow extremism to thrive. Democrats will fight terrorism with all the means at our disposal, using military force when necessary, but also leading international efforts to uphold and defend human rights and renew the longstanding alliances that have advanced our national security objectives.

Under Real Security, we will confront the specter of nuclear terrorism by greatly accelerating the pace at which we are securing nuclear material that can be used to make a nuclear weapon or a dirty bomb. Our goal is to secure loose nukes by 2010. We will redouble our efforts to stop nuclear weapons development in Iran and North Korea. And while Democrats understand that no option can be taken off the table, we are committed to using a muscular diplomacy as the best option for curbing Pyongyang and Iran's nuclear ambitions.

The third pillar of Real Security is homeland security. In the wake of 9/11, there have been numerous commissions and investigations at the Federal, State and local levels, as well as a multitude of private studies. All of them have pointed to broad, systemic and

other flaws in our homeland security program. Almost 2 years ago the bipartisan 9/11 Commission published its report, but most of its recommendations have not yet been implemented.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats will immediately implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, including securing national borders, ports, airports and mass transit systems. We will implement the screening of 100 percent of containers and cargo bound for the United States in ships or airplanes at their point of origin, and we will take steps to better safeguard America's nuclear and chemical plants and our food and water supplies.

Democrats will prevent the outsourcing of critical components of our national security infrastructure such as ports, airports and mass transit to foreign interests that could put America at risk.

Under Real Security, Democrats would provide firefighters, emergency medical workers, police officers, and other workers on the front lines with the training, the staffing, the equipment and the cutting-edge technology that they need.

While the immediate threats to our national security come from terrorists, we face other dangers as well. Democrats are committed to a security strategy that will protect America from biological terrorism and pandemics, including the avian flu, by investing in the public health infrastructure and training public health workers.

The fourth pillar, and the one that will have the most immediate effect on our security and the longest-term effect on our security, is to chart a new course in Iraq that will ensure that in the coming months we see a significant transition to full Iraqi sovereignty, with the Iraqis assuming primary responsibility for securing and governing their country with a responsible redeployment of U.S. forces.

Democrats will insist that Iraqis make the political compromises that are necessary to unite their country, defeat the insurgency, and we will promote regional diplomacy and strongly encourage our allies in other nations to play a constructive role. Those nations now are largely on the sidelines.

As a part of Real Security, Democrats intend to hold this administration accountable for its manipulated prewar intelligence, its poor planning, contracting abuses that have placed our troops at greater risk and have wasted billions of taxpayer dollars.

Our security will remain threatened as long as we remain dependent on Middle East oil. The fifth pillar, and one with far-reaching ramifications for our country and for the world, is to achieve energy independence for America by 2020.

Under Real Security, Democrats will increase the production of alternate fuels from America's heartland: biofuels, geothermal, clean coal, fuel

cells, solar and wind. We will promote hybrid and flex-fuel technology in manufacturing, enhance energy efficiency and conservation measures. All of this we will do, and more, to meet the real national security needs of our country.

We are joined tonight by the minority whip, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), who has been a great leader on national security issues. I would invite the minority whip to address us this evening, along with our colleague from Maryland and our colleague from Georgia.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding the time, and I am pleased to join him and certainly adopt his remarks, which I think are fundamental to this debate that will be going on for the next 6 weeks in our country about how we effect Real Security. That is our objective. That is our commitment as Democrats.

We believe that terrorism is a real threat. We believe that we have a responsibility to confront and defeat that threat. That is our responsibility as citizens, and that is our responsibility as elected representatives.

I am pleased to join Mr. SCHIFF, who has been such a leader on national security issues in the Congress; my dear friend from Maryland and colleague Mr. VAN HOLLEN, who has a depth of knowledge and experience in foreign policy issues and national security issues; and my good friend from the State of Georgia, Mr. DAVID SCOTT. The State of Georgia has historically had leaders in national defense. On our side of the aisle, most recently was Sam Nunn, one of the most extraordinarily able and thoughtful spokespersons for national security.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for taking this time. Our highest duty as Members of this Congress is to protect the American people, to protect our homeland and to strengthen our national security. We Democrats are proud of our party's strong tradition of leadership in world affairs from Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman and John Kennedy, indeed to Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton, it will be recalled, most recently marshaled the NATO Alliance, received the imprimatur of the United Nations, confronted the genocide being led by Slobodan Milosevic, defeated and stopped the genocide, stopped the ethnic cleansing, and put Slobodan Milosevic in the dock in trial at the Hague, all without losing a single American life in combat.

These leaders demonstrated that defending America requires our Nation to marshal the full range of its powers, economic and moral, diplomatic and military, to fight for freedom, to foster democracy, and to defeat tyranny and terrorism.

I believe that Members on both sides of the aisle are committed to this Nation's security. Any suggestion to the contrary, in my opinion, is either mistaken or quite possibly malicious par-

tisanship. Furthermore, I believe that members of the loyal opposition, in this case us congressional Democrats, have the responsibility to critique the wisdom and effectiveness of the policies pursued by the majority party. That is what our Founding Fathers conceived. That is what our Founding Fathers believed was absolutely essential for the success of our democracy: A Congress and an executive and indeed a judiciary that provided checks and balances, provided thoughtful alternatives to policies being pursued, and provided constructive criticism. The fact is our Nation and our people are not as safe today as they could and should be.

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I accept the fact that we are safer, but I repeat, that we are not as safe as we could or should be. Osama bin Laden, the architect of the worst terrorist attack on America in our history, remains at large. We still have not fully implemented the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission, for which the commission itself has criticized us sharply. In fact, Tom Kean, the co-chair, the former Republican Governor of the State of New Jersey, the co-chair of the 9/11 Commission and the former Republican Governor, as I said, of New Jersey, recently stated: "We are not protecting our own people in this country. The government is not doing its job." What powerful words and what a call to attention are Governor Kean's words.

Meanwhile, the nuclear threats from North Korea and Iran have increased dramatically in the last 6 years. The Taliban is resurgent in Afghanistan, where roadside bombs have increased 30 percent and suicide bombings have doubled. And anti-Americanism has unfortunately and dangerously risen by substantial proportions. Even former Secretary of State and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Colin Powell, who has served this country so honorably in uniform and as a diplomat, remarked last week: "The world is beginning to doubt the moral basis of our fight against terrorism."

That is an extraordinary dangerous condition. We cannot nor should we fight this war against terrorists alone. We must have allies. We must have allies who respect us, who believe that our word is credible, and believe that our leadership is based upon values, insight, good intelligence, and conviction. Without question, Madam Speaker, our continuing military action in Iraq has fomented much of this anti-American sentiment.

Let me add that I supported the effort to remove Saddam Hussein as the dictator in Iraq. Democrats, however, as the loyal opposition, believe that we have a duty to honestly appraise the gross miscalculations and, I suggest, even incompetence that have plagued Operation Iraqi Freedom from its very start and to offer alternatives.

The administration ignored the advice of top military commanders and

sent far too few troops to accomplish the task at hand. Recall, if you will, that we sent over a half million troops in the fall of 1990 to confront Saddam Hussein and his army in the late winter of 1991. We sent those troops to eject Hussein from Kuwait. We sent a force one-third, however, the size in 2003 not only to confront Saddam Hussein's army but to take control and stabilize an entire nation of 22 million-plus people and to ensure its stability.

As Tom Friedman of the New York Times has stated: "If we're in such a titanic struggle with radical Islam and if getting Iraq right is at the center of that struggle, why did the Bush administration fight the Iraq war with the Rumsfeld doctrine, just enough troops to lose, and not the Powell doctrine of overwhelming force to create the necessary foundation of any democracy-building project, which is," of course, "security?"

The administration, with Mr. Bremer as its viceroy in Iraq, fired police and security forces and oil workers, which increased, not decreased, instability. It initiated the war before making alternative plans when the Turks told us that we could not come in through the north so we could shut the back door to Baghdad. And as a result, many of those in the Saddam Hussein armed forces escaped and were a basis for an insurgency.

In fact, just this month Brigadier General Mark Scheid revealed that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld said he would "fire the next person" who talked about the need for a post-war plan. There was no effective plan for post-Saddam Hussein regime nation-building. As a result, chaos occurred.

The administration failed to properly equip our own troops, Mr. SCHIFF has pointed that out, nearly 2,700 of whom have given the ultimate measure of sacrifice in this war. All of us in our districts have lost people in this war.

The administration grossly underestimated the cost of the war at about \$60 billion. Today, the war costs stand at five times that amount, in excess of \$300 billion. All of that has happened, I suggest to you, Madam Speaker, without significant oversight and appropriate hearings being conducted by this Congress, which is our responsibility to our constituents and to our country.

The administration hired inexperienced and unqualified political appointees for the Coalition Provisional Authority, as The Washington Post reported on Sunday. And when confronted with concrete evidence of widespread mistreatment of detainees in American custody, the President failed to hold anyone in his administration accountable.

All of this, Madam Speaker, has undermined the effectiveness of an effort that I supported. Some did not. But whether you supported it or you did not, you must lament the fact that the execution of the policy has been so unsuccessful.

Madam Speaker, as Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold, the former commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, has stated: "What we are living with now is the consequence of successive policy failures." That is not a Democrat or a Republican but a three-star general concerned about his troops, concerned about our country, concerned about the success of an effort given to our Armed Forces.

The current strategy for our military, our security, and the Iraqi people is neither working nor making us more secure. Our colleague Congressman SKELTON of Missouri has pointed out that there is not a single Army non-deployed combat brigade currently prepared to meet its wartime mission. That, Madam Speaker, is an extraordinary assertion and I suggest an accurate one as well.

Meanwhile, the news in Iraq is equally dire. The chief of intelligence for the Marine Corps in Iraq has concluded that prospects for securing that country's Anbar Province are dim and there is almost nothing the U.S. military can do to improve the political and social situation there. Thirty-four people were killed in suicide attacks on Monday in Tal Afar and Ramadi. Fifty-two bound and tortured corpses were found across Baghdad on Friday. And just today General John Abizaid, the commander of the U.S. Central Command, said that the U.S. military will likely maintain or possibly increase current force levels through next spring due to rising sectarian violence and the slow progress of the Iraqi Government.

Madam Speaker, I want the Iraqi Government to succeed. I want democracy to flourish. I want a robust economy creating jobs and hope for its people to be in place. However, Madam Speaker, the policies that we have pursued have not accomplished that objective.

Clearly, Madam Speaker, we need a new direction. I believe, as former National Security Adviser Brzezinski has said, that American and Iraqi leaders should jointly consult on a plan to transition from active American leadership and policing and securing Iraq to increasing Iraqi responsibility.

I do not believe that we should announce an arbitrary timeline, but I do believe that discussions on this transition should be agreed upon and jointly announced.

In addition, the Iraqi Government, not the United States, should then call for a regional conference of Muslim states to ask them to help the new government establish and consolidate internal stability. I suggest, Madam Speaker, that is in the interest of every regional state in the Middle East.

Additionally, the United States should convene a donors' conference of European states, Japan, China, and others to become more directly involved in financing the restoration of the Iraqi economy. A stable, secure, and free Iraq is in the best interest of

the entire international community; and because it is in their interest, they bear a joint responsibility to effect that end.

Madam Speaker, this is our last best chance, in my opinion, to salvage success in Iraq. Our commitment there has been unwavering, but it must not be unending. Our strategy, hampered by gross miscalculations by our civilian leadership, is not working; and we believe that we have a duty to advocate for policy changes that will better serve our security interest and this great Nation we love.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, I reiterate, Democrats are committed to defending America, making safe Americans, and defeating terrorists who would harm our Nation and undermine our values. Our policies that we are pursuing have not worked. They need to be changed.

Again, I thank Mr. SCHIFF for his leadership on this hour.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman from Maryland for his leadership.

And I particularly appreciate your comments about the proposal that Zbigniew Brzezinski has put forward. It is, I think, exemplary of the new direction in Iraq that Democrats have been advocating.

The administration's policy of stay the course, the sum and substance of it, is more of the same. Indeed, in a nonclassified briefing when I asked Secretaries Rumsfeld and Rice, Director Negroponte and General Pace how are we adapting our strategy given that the sectarian violence is now more prominent than the insurgent violence, how are we changing from a counterinsurgency strategy to one that attempts to stop the civil war, the long and short of it is we weren't. We are simply doing the same thing we have done all along. The same thing that has led us to a place, as you pointed out, where Marine intelligence is saying we lost Anbar Province probably for good. If you keep doing the same thing and you expect the result to be different, you are going to be bitterly disappointed.

And I thank the gentleman for his comments and his leadership on this.

Mr. HOYER. Thank you very much.

Mr. SCHIFF. For a small State, I have to say Maryland produces more than its share of great leaders, particularly on the issue of national security.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHIFF. Yes.

Mr. HOYER. Of course our small State has given your large State our leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. That is true.

I now yield to my friend and colleague from Maryland, Mr. VAN HOLLEN.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. I thank my friend and colleague Mr. SCHIFF from California, thank him for organizing these very important national security discussions here on the floor in the House. I also want to thank my colleague from

Maryland STENY HOYER for his terrific leadership on national security and a whole range of issues, and it is great to be here again with DAVID SCOTT, my colleague, from Georgia, who has also been a leader and a very important voice on these important issues to our country.

Mr. HOYER mentioned that we had the important passing about 8 days ago of the solemn occasion of 9/11. It was the 5th-year anniversary of 9/11 and the terrible attacks that took place upon our country. And I do think it is important to go back to that time and remember where those attacks came from because they were launched from Afghanistan. You had a failed state in Afghanistan run by the Taliban; and in that failed state, al Qaeda was able to take hold and find a home, and Osama bin Laden was able to prosper and plot his attacks against the United States.

And after the attacks took place on September 11, 2001, this Congress, this country, and the international community were united in pledging that we would work together to defeat terrorism, to defeat al Qaeda and bring them to justice. And despite that unity, we have not achieved the result. In fact, if you look upon the situation today, there is great division in the world and we have failed to capitalize on that unity to finish the job in Afghanistan and against al Qaeda.

The President declared war back in 2003, May 2003, aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Lincoln*, he had a big banner behind him that said "Mission Accomplished." Well, we haven't come close to accomplishing that mission because as we gather here on the floor today, Osama bin Laden is alive and well somewhere along the Afghan/Pakistan border, al Qaeda continues to plot attacks against the United States. They have become a franchiser. You know how al Qaeda franchises around the world.

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We have not made progress at totally dismantling that organization. In fact, what we are seeing in southern Afghanistan is a resurgence of the Taliban as reported by the NATO Commander there, and our own commanders on the ground.

What have we done? We have actually reduced the number of U.S. forces in southern Afghanistan. We disbanded the one unit at the CIA that had the specific mission of going after al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden.

You open the newspaper today and see that the opium crop in Afghanistan is at an all-time high, historic high. And we also know that the Pakistan Government that we had been really relying on to keep the Taliban and al Qaeda on the run in the northwest frontier part of Pakistan, that, in fact, they have now, the Pakistani Government has entered into a nonaggression pact essentially with the Taliban leaders and the leaders in the Waziristan area.

So here we are more than 5 years after those terrible attacks, and we have not completed the job. We have not finished the mission against al Qaeda. And instead, in my view, we have actually reduced our commitment to doing that. And we must make sure that as Americans we are again united today, making sure we finish the mission in Afghanistan and bringing to justice and defeating the organization that, after all, was the organization and the leadership responsible for those attacks of September 11.

Instead, we did take our eye off the ball. We decided, instead of finishing the job in Afghanistan, to go into Iraq. And today, unfortunately, if you look at the situation on the ground, it is a mess.

You know, the Vice President, it was a little more a year ago, he went on national television and said, and I quote, that "the insurgency in Iraq was in its last throes."

Well, just a few weeks ago we had a Pentagon report required by Congress that said that the insurgency, and I quote, "remains potent and viable." And, in fact, the insurgency no longer is our number one problem in Iraq. The real problem is the cycling civil war, whether it is called a civil war, an incipient civil war, incipient of people are being killed in sectarian violence.

So you have a situation where the administration was wrong on so many counts. They were wrong on weapons of mass destruction, they were wrong on the claim that there was a connection between Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. In fact, we now have a bipartisan report out of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that said definitively there was never any relationship between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. In fact, they were adversaries, they were ideological opposites. They were wrong on that.

They were wrong on the cost of the war. They totally underestimated the cost of the war. They gave the American people one number that was low-balled. In turn it was a much bigger number.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. VAN HOLLEN, notwithstanding all of those mistakes in judgment and execution of the war, I am sure it gave you great confidence to hear from the Vice President on Meet the Press that if he had to do it all over again, he would do exactly the same thing. That must have encouraged you.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. It was stunning actually, because what you would hope for from our national leaders is some reflection, some understanding that the situation that we encountered in Iraq was not what we expected, that it was not what he said it would be. And, in fact, unfortunately this administration has never come to grips with the huge gap between what they said would happen in Iraq and with what is happening on the ground. That has exposed, I believe, a great credibility gap.

So when the administration says, trust us, we know what we are doing in

Iraq; all you people who raise questions, don't you worry about it, I have to say, that is what they told us many, many years ago. That is what Vice President CHENEY said more than a year ago when he said the insurgency was in its last throes. So asking questions and trying to figure out a better way is, in fact, the patriotic thing to do.

But I think one of the things that is most surprising is the fact that the administration did not really have a postwar plan. They thought things were going to just go so swimmingly in Iraq, that you did not have to plan for really the postinvasion period.

In fact, just about a week ago, there was a general from the Defense Department who not only said that they did not have a postwar plan, but said specifically that Secretary Rumsfeld would punish anybody who came up with a plan, because it would send a signal to the outside world that this would not be as quick and easy as the Secretary of Defense wanted people to think it was.

And let me just, I think it is important to read this excerpt: "Rumsfeld Forbade Planning for Postwar Iraq, General Says." This is out of the Saturday, September 9, Washington Post. "Long before the United States invaded Iraq in 2003, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld forbade military strategists to develop plans for securing a postwar Iraq, the retiring Commander of the Army Transportation Corps said."

Brigadier General Mark Scheid said in an interview, that Rumsfeld said "he would fire the next person" who talked about the need for a postwar plan. And we wonder why we are in trouble today in Iraq. We wonder when we open our newspapers or look at television sets why we see such a mess.

You know, the terrible thing is that there were people in the administration who had worked on a postwar plan. Many people at the State Department had developed different scenarios for what would happen and how to respond. But instead of following that plan, the Defense Department essentially junked it, and Secretary Rumsfeld not only did not come up with a plan, but now we have a brigadier general who said that he threatened to fire people who came up with a plan.

We need to do some more firing. We need to hold people accountable. We need to hold people accountable who made these big, big mistakes.

Now, one of the other things that we have learned recently, and this may be partly due to the fact that they did not have a postwar plan, was the incompetence of many of the civilians that they sent in there to work on the reconstruction phase in Iraq. You know, we recently passed the 1-year anniversary of the terrible Hurricanes Katrina and Rita that struck our States in the Southern United States, struck New Orleans, struck Louisiana, struck Mississippi.

And we know all too well that the people in those regions were hit twice really. First they were hit by a terrible hurricane, and then they were hit by the incompetence of a FEMA that was headed up by people who were not experts in emergency response, but happened to be political favorites in the administration. Michael Brown, we know that his primary credential was he had been the President of the Horse Breeders Association.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. VAN HOLLEN, I am sure if there had been an emergency of a national character involving thoroughbred horses, we would have been prepared.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Well, the FEMA job, as we know, is one that we have to be prepared for all sorts of things, but you are absolutely right, my colleague. It goes to show, in my view, the kind of disdain that the administration has with respect to what kind of qualifications are required for people who are vested with such important national responsibilities.

And we remember when the President said, "Heck of a job, Brownie," in the midst of the real disaster not just from the hurricane, but in the response.

But what I think we are learning now, unfortunately, is that same kind of cronyism, that same kind of cronyism infected many of the decisions with respect to who we sent to Iraq for that postwar period and reconstruction period.

You would think that in deciding who we should send to Iraq, we would send the people who are highly qualified at reconstruction, people who knew something about Iraq, maybe people who spoke Arabic and the native language if we had them available. But if you look at a very recent article from the Washington Post, we learned that it was not those kind of expert qualifications that made the decision. It had to do with whether or not you were a big political supporter of the Bush administration.

And I think this kind of political cronyism, when it comes to the biggest national security issues we have got, shows an incredible contempt for the American people and their security.

I just think it is very important to read a little passage from this article from the Washington Post. This is an article, September, this past Sunday, September 17. Headline: Ties to GOP Trumped Know-How Among Staff Sent to Rebuild Iraq. After the fall of Saddam Hussein's government in April 2003, the opportunity to participate in the U.S.-led effort to reconstruct Iraq attracted all manner of Americans, restless professionals, Arabic-speaking academics, development specialists, and war-zone adventurers. But before they could go to Baghdad, they had to just get past Jim O'Beirne's office in the Pentagon.

To pass muster with O'Beirne, who is a political appointee who screens prospective political appointees for Defense Department posts, applicants did

not need to be experts in the Middle East or in postconflict reconstruction. What seemed most important was loyalty to the Bush administration.

Jumping down a bit: The decision to send the loyal and willing instead of the best and the brightest is now regarded by many people involved in the 3½-year effort to stabilize and rebuild Iraq as one of the Bush administration's gravest errors.

And one of the people who was set up to be, he was the CPA person over there, said: We did not tap, and it should have started from the White House on down, we just did not tap the right people to do this job, said Frederick Smith, who served as the Deputy Director of the CPA, that is the Coalition Provisional Authority's Washington office. It was a tough, tough job. Instead, we got people who went out there because of their political leanings.

He goes on to give a couple of examples of how people with absolutely no experience in contracts were given responsibilities for a \$18 billion construction budget.

He goes on to talk about, you know, 24-year-old political appointees whose only qualifications were they had been part of the Bush campaign machine. Those are the people that were sent to Iraq to do a very important mission for the American people.

And it is extremely disturbing to discover that the qualifications for those people had nothing to do with their ability to do the job, their expertise to do the job, their past background to do the job; that what it had to do with was whether they were a big political booster of the Bush administration. It points out that many of them were big political contributors to the Bush administration.

Taking that kind of license with our national security, I think, is scandalous. It is important that we begin to hold people to account. Let's begin to have a real national conversation, not just a one-way discussion that the President wants to have.

Let's have some real hearings on Capitol Hill. Let's begin to have some accountability, because we all know that when you have a system that rewards people who fail, that gives a pat on the back to the people who constantly got it wrong, and yet at the same time penalizes the people who got it right in this administration, the people who said we needed more troops on the ground, the people who questioned some of the decisions, it turns out that people who questioned the decisions were ignored or penalized. People like this general who wanted to do some postwar planning was ignored. In fact, they threatened to fire people who did that kind of thing.

□ 2200

If you reward failure, you are going to get more failure. What we are asking I think tonight and on other nights is that we just begin to hold people ac-

countable and that this House of Representatives begin to do its job, and not be a rubber stamp, not just say yes, Mr. President, you know it all, when in fact we know from what is going on in Iraq that they have gotten so much wrong. Let's begin to get it right, and let's begin to ask the hard questions. I thank my colleague.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank my colleague for his statement tonight and all your tremendous leadership on this. I am confident with Democrats we will not only have a new direction, but we will have a functioning government of checks and balances where there is actual oversight by the Congress of the administration, which every administration needs, no matter how good, but particularly when the administration has made such serious mistakes that have placed this Nation so much in jeopardy. We need oversight.

I would add only one thing, and this you may have watched, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the interview with the President from New Orleans when he went down for the Katrina anniversary, and Brian Williams asked him, "Mr. President, some people have criticized that you have never really asked for a sacrifice of the American people in the war on terror. Is that a fair criticism?"

His answer really struck me, because we have been talking about the American people being brought in and given a chance to contribute to our security and our success with an Apollo-like project for energy independence.

Well, the President's idea of sacrifice, he said, "Brian, that is not true. The American people have sacrificed. After 9/11, our economy was hurt, so American people sacrificed. And they pay taxes. They pay a lot of taxes, Brian."

That was it. That was the sacrifice he was asking. Now, if he had been a little more forthcoming, he might have said, "Now, Brian, they pay taxes. They pay a lot of taxes, although actually they pay less taxes since 9/11, thanks to me, so the sacrifice really is they pay less taxes. That is their contribution."

And you have to ask, where are the Rosie the Riveters? Who is being called upon? These troops of ours that are doing these multiple rotations, they are sacrificing and their families are sacrificing. But what have the rest of us been asked to do? And in this body, I would think at a minimum we could move forward with far-reaching legislation to wean ourselves from reliance on fossil fuels. We could initiate real oversight with vigor. These are the kind of new directions we need to take this country in.

I yield now to my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, DAVID SCOTT, a fellow Blue Dog member, who has been such a superb voice on these issues.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much, Mr. SCHIFF. Of course, it is great to be here with you again, and my good friend CHRIS VAN HOLLEN from

Maryland. He is a tremendous advocate for national security. I have enjoyed his opening remarks and very thought-provoking remarks. And certainly it is always good to be on the floor with our leader, STENY HOYER, who has long been a champion of national security. That is certainly the issue today.

This is the issue that is on the minds of the American people. This is prime time, national security. We have got to make sure the American people not only feel safe, but we guarantee that they are safe. We have the capacity to do that.

As I stand here, I was observing the remarks earlier about the contributions that the great State of Maryland and all of our great States have made to our strong defense and national security, and certainly I am proud to say that Georgia, my State, is certainly at the head of the list on that as well.

I stand here on the shoulders of some great folks who have been strong on national security and helped to secure this country and make us the superior military power that we are, men like Senator Sam Nunn and Senator Richard Russell from my fine State of Georgia. I stand here on the shoulders of those great Democratic leaders who have led the way.

Mr. SCHIFF. If I can interject, Mr. SCOTT, because I don't want to do any disservice to the great State of Georgia, a couple other superb Members who are contemporaries of ours, JIM MARSHALL and JOHN BARROW, great, great advocates and leaders on national security. JIM MARSHALL is a decorated war veteran. So Georgia has got more than its share.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Absolutely. JIM and I have traveled overseas together. He was a decorated war veteran from Vietnam. So we stand tall as Democrats when it comes to national security, without any question.

I want to start my remarks off, because I think today will go down in history as a very profound day, starting with the United Nations. Today presented some very interesting pictures as we watched television. Two speeches, of course, stand out on this day.

I don't think I can remember in history when the President of the United States addressed the United Nations, but yet one of our chief adversaries, one of which he labeled one of the "axis of evil," the President of Iran, Ahmadinejad, came in prime time, while the President spoke earlier, not in prime time.

I am wondering how we got to this point? Where did this president of Iran come from? Five years ago we had never heard of him. Certainly I hadn't. But here he is at the United Nations, in fact upstaging our President. If I were working at the White House, I certainly would not have allowed the President of the United States to be over there on the same day. I felt that was very, very interesting.

It might do us a little good to understand how we got to this point, and the



way we do that, I think, is to start off this discussion by clearly pointing out to the American people something that they are gradually beginning to see, and that is this, that we are fighting two distinct wars; one war is on terror, the other war is in Iraq.

One war is of necessity. It was necessary. That is the war on terror, which is where we went into Afghanistan to go after the terrorist organization that attacked us on 9/11. That was a war of necessity, and we went there because that is where the enemy was that attacked us. That is where al Qaeda was. That is where bin Laden was, on that border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. We got the support of NATO and we got the support of the government of Afghanistan, with their help, and we went in there.

But then we went into Iraq, and we went into Iraq on a lot of manufactured, now we know the truth, incomplete information, maybe false information, perhaps even manipulated information. Those are the facts. That is what is out there. But, nonetheless, we went into Iraq in a war of choice.

Now we need to do a cost-benefit analysis, which brings me to the point I wanted to get to earlier, to segue back in, to show these two connecting points of what happened today, where the President of the United States is upstaged by the President of Iran, a president we did not even know about 5 years ago.

But when you do the cost-benefit analysis on the war of choice, which is the war in Iraq, not the war on terror, which is the war of necessity in Afghanistan, and do a cost-benefit analysis, in other words, look at our cost: 2,600 soldiers, men and women who gave their lives, who were killed; nearly 20,000 wounded; over \$600 billion expended at a rate of \$3 billion every week. That is the cost.

Who benefited? Who benefited? Who benefited? Iraq. When we went into Afghanistan, although we went in on the war on terror, we went after the Taliban, doing, again, Iraq's bidding. That was their enemy.

When we went into Iraq, without question the chief beneficiary of that was Iran. They were the beneficiaries, because Saddam Hussein was their worst blood enemy. We did the dirty work for Iran. On the other account, we established a Shia regime there, a Shia government in Iraq. That, again, was a benefit to Iran.

□ 2210

They were able to control that.

The other thing, all the while we are doing this, they are busy developing their nuclear capacity so that now that they have the nuclear capacity, again, a checkmate and a benefit for Iraq.

So that now my point is simply that because of some of our policies, most definitely going into Iraq, the major beneficiary of our going into Iraq is Iran, which now is boosted on the stage and is here this day, in this country, at

the United Nations, giving a speech. And here is a man who is the sponsor of the very terrorist organization that controlled the Lebanon situation, as well as the Hamas, which controls the Palestinian.

All I am simply saying is our national security policies, our foreign policies have had a devastating impact, and that when we do the cost/benefit analysis, it certainly benefits Iraq. It has taken us away from pursuing the goal of finding and decapitating the head of the mastermind of the terrorist organization that came to destroy us.

That is why the American people are beginning to see this differentiation, and we are not going to be able to find our way out of this unless we finally do so we can understand exactly what this situation in Iraq is doing, and like you, we are not standing here just talking. We are standing here explaining how we earnestly feel as Americans, strong, patriotic Americans, who care about this country, and who resent the President of the United States saying that anytime we question that, we are not patriotic. We are doing our duty that the American people sent us up here to do to raise these important issues.

We cannot stay the course, not this course. Sixty-three percent of the American people say they want a new direction. It is up to Democrats to provide that direction.

The other issue which concerns me is the state of our military. Not only must we explain to the American people and help to dramatize and explain clearly and show how we are dealing with two distinct wars, one of necessity, one of choice, but the drain on the military, we have got to correct that. Our military is in a draining state. We are not meeting our recruiting goals. We are on two and three tours of duty there.

We are in a terrible hole in Iraq, and we have got to extricate ourselves out of it. The challenge is to do so with yet the dignity and the respect that we must do so to honor the sacrifice of our men and women who have given their lives there, while at the same time putting the responsibility on the Iraqis themselves to manifest their destiny. They want democracy. We cannot shove it at them with a gun. They have to feel it in their soul. They have to go forward and grab it. That is not happening, and that is what we have to do to get this moving forward in a way that gives the respect to our military who have given their lives there.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman very much for your comments, for your leadership on this issue. It has been a great pleasure and honor to share a few thoughts with you and our colleague Mr. VAN HOLLEN and our whip Mr. HOYER. Once again, I want to thank the great State of Georgia for sending you to Congress.

#### THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. SCHMIDT). Under the Speaker's an-

nounced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to come back before the House as representative of the majority party. And as I was sitting and listening to the tail end of my good friends on the other side of the aisle with their recitation of doom and gloom, Madam Speaker, I was reminded of a radio personality who has a wonderful program on daily. He comes on and he introduces his program by saying, "And now for the rest of the story."

So, Madam Speaker, I come before you tonight and before the House with another version of the Official Truth Squad. The Official Truth Squad began a little over a year ago with a group of freshmen Republicans in the United States House of Representatives who had, frankly, grown tired of the lack of response to the disinformation and the misinformation and the distortion and the demagoguery and the hyperbole that we hear over and over and over on the House floor. And, Madam Speaker, you have been treated to a particularly virulent form of that kind of disinformation and misinformation in the past hour.

Before I get into the comments that I had prepared for this evening to talk a little bit about national security and talk about our economy, I do want to point out a couple of items for those folks in the House who are listening and have just heard the comments on the floor.

I think it is important to make certain that we talk about the truth, and when we talk about the truth, I am reminded of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's famous quote. It is one of my favorites. Senator Moynihan was a Democratic Senator from the State of New York, and he said that everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts. Is that not true, Madam Speaker? Everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts.

So I am here to point out just a few of the opinions that we have heard this evening that, in fact, bear no resemblance to the truth and bear no resemblance to fact, but that are so divisive to us as a Nation. That is what concerns me, Madam Speaker.

My background is as a physician. I came to Congress after over 20 years practicing medicine, and I knew that when I dealt with my patients and when I dealt with my colleagues, that we had to talk about the truth. We had to talk about real things. We had to talk about facts, because when you did not talk about facts, then you made the wrong diagnosis, and when you make the wrong diagnosis, somebody gets hurt. Somebody gets hurt.

So, Madam Speaker, when my colleagues on the other side of the aisle do not want to talk about the facts, and they do not want to talk about the